

'We Are Fighting for Liberty,' Says a

The following dispatch was written by Robert C. Miller, a United Press International correspondent who was detained in Cambodia by Communist soldiers for eight hours Saturday, during which time he interviewed a North Vietnamese commander.

PNOMPENH, Cambodia, May 25 — The North Vietnamese commander spoke thoughtfully and deliberately. "We are fighting for liberty, for equality and against corruption," he said.

good, fine, but if it is bad . . ."

A kerosene lamp, a polished hardwood table, the high paneled walls of a large house and a heavy tropical night outside were the backdrops of a two-hour discussion at a guerrilla headquarters in Takeo Province, south of Pnompenn.

Cambodian villagers sprawled on the beds or squatted in the shadows, listening intently.

"I have no message for you," the North Vietnamese commander said through an interpreter. "I ask only that you write what you see. If it is

Prince Norodom Sihanouk as He smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

The commander came in so quietly during the preliminary discussion with his lieutenants that he was seated in the plastic chair almost before anyone realized he was there.

He answered all political questions, but of his personal life he said only that he had not seen his wife, in Hanoi, and that they had no children.

The commander discussed the situation in Cambodia since the ouster on March 18 of

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North Vietnamese Troop Commander in Cambodia

Chief of State, the establishment of the Government of Premier Lon Nol and the subsequent formation by Prince Sihanouk of an exile government.

"There are seven million people in Cambodia," he said, "and all of them want Prince Sihanouk to return. The old people all have his pictures on the wall but they hide them when the Lon Nol troops come. We are here to help restore his Government and wipe out the graft and corruption of the Lon Nol regime."

"What can I say about the

Americans?" the commander asked. "They have been causing trouble all over the world for years. Now they have come here to try to prop up the Lon Nol Government, which is so weak it cannot find enough Cambodians to fight for it."

Strength Said to Grow

"Compare us to the Lon Nol troops or the Saigon troops," he challenged. "Do you see anyone hiding behind shuttered doors here? But what did you see at Tram Khnar after the Government troops occupied it?"

Everyone was in hiding. We were weak at first but we are growing stronger daily."

There was a brief halt in the discussion when two porcelain teapots appeared along with a maroon plastic tray with heavy glasses.

The commander was asked if he had known about the allied offensive into Cambodia before it began on April 28.

He paused for a longer time than usual before answering: "Yes, we knew all about it from the South Vietnamese."

The discussion ended as the

North Vietnamese listed what he termed the Communist objectives in Cambodia:

"We want Cambodia to be free of domination by the rich who never cared about the poor, and we want Cambodians to be able to get plenty of food, adequate clothing, a peaceful life. That was what Prince Sihanouk was trying to do and that is why we are helping him."

Asked when he expected Prince Sihanouk to return, he listened to the translation, smiled and answered, "Soon."